

Group III: Claims 25 and 32, drawn to a method of recovering metals and minerals from sea water by using a transgenic sponge that harbors a bacteria capable of concentrating said metals or minerals, classified in classes 800 and 435.

Group IV: Claim 27, drawn to a method of recovering metals and minerals from sea water by using a Cenarchaeum symbiosum, classified in class 435, subclass 252.1.

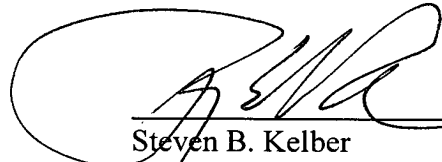
Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement. Applicants submit that the distinction drawn between Groups I and II is not so significant that the examination of Group I would not also encompass the claims of Group II. As indicated in the restriction requirement, the overlapping classification of the two groups would enable the examiner to search both groups without the investment of additional time or effort. Similarly, the claims of Group III and IV are also classified in class 435 with only one differing subclassification so as to permit the examination of all claims with minimal additional effort by the Examiner. Applicants have provided more than adequate disclosure in the specification to support all of the claims to their invention of providing a method of recovering metals and minerals from sea water through use of the symbiotic relationship of sponges and bacteria. The restriction of the claims thus diminishes the true scope and nature of the Applicants invention.

Applicants submit that the application is now in condition for examination on the merits.  
Early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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